background information

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Christian Faith

Before I go on to discuss the main subject, I ought also to make clear what are the essential constituents of the Christian faith in the light of which we may consider socialism. I will mention four ideas which I consider fundamental to the Christian faith.

The first is the sacredness of individual human personality, the worth of the individual human being to God, which I think is central to the whole Christian conception of redemption.

The second is the principle of love. "God so loved the world." "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." "Love thy neighbour as thyself." "Love your enemies." The prevailing note of the teaching of Christ as recorded in the Gospels is love.

The third is the idea of fellowship. Not merely do we love one another as individuals, but this relationship of love should become the basis of a corporate sense binding people into groups of kindred spirits working for common ends. Christ worked in intimate association with His disciples. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. The Church is a world wide fellowship which remains a fellowship although today it is fragmented. That fellowship is not merely a fellowship of men and women who are alive today, it is a fellowship that binds together generations of believers, a Communion of Saints.

The fourth constituent of faith is the place of spiritual power in the shaping of human life. A distinction is clearly made in the teachings of Christ between knowledge of right and the power to do right. That is why the personality of Christ fills so large a place in Christian faith. His personality is a faithful embodiment of His teaching and when He left this mortal world, He sent down the Holy Spirit to continue His work. There was a meaningful phrase which we used to hear often when I was a student, to practise the presence of God. There are several ways to do this: meditation, private prayer corporate worship and the sacraments. It is necessary for us to ask for spiritual power because we are still beset by instincts which lead us into paths that we would rather avoid.

Having stated as far as I understand them, the essential elements in socialism and in the Christian faith, I would like to discuss the one in relation to the other. How far can the Christian way of life be related to the socialistic pattern of society?

Freedom and Security

First of all, I shall take the importance of human personality. If personality is to develop to its fullest stature and the individual is to make his distinctive contribution and fulfil the purpose God has for him, then he must be free. When you try to transform the idea of freedom into some kind of social organization, then you come up against the idea of democracy. In this country today we have political democracy based on the widest possible franchise, and we are trying in a fashion to supplement it with economic democracy.

If the discussion here is to be of any practical use, we must refer to a problem which is going to worry us a great deal in the coming years. Will it be possible for a democratic state to carry out a big plan of economic development of the kind we are attempting? In a book on economic growth, a distinguished teacher of economics in England has said that democracy can plan on paper, but the implementation of the plan may make it necessary to place severe limitations upon the freedom of the individual citizen. I am raising this point because I think, unless we are careful, we are going to be confronted with this problem. Take for example, the Indian Second Five Year Plan. The implementation of that plan is likely to raise at least two severe internal conflicts. One, of which we hear a great deal today, is the conflict between the small and the large producer. If some curb is not put upon the large producer, the small man will not have a chance. On the other hand, if too rigid a curb is put on the large producer in the present circumstances, there will be a period of relative scarcity, which might result in a considerable rise in the level of prices.

There is another conflict which arises from the fact that in order to find the financial resources necessary for carrying out this plan, it will be necessary to resort to what is called deficit finance. Unless circumstances are very favourable, we are likely, as this deficit financing goes on, to have a definite inflationary trend. The man with a fixed income will suffer and there will be a conflict between two segments of our economy. When internal conflicts of this kind arise, to what extent can a free community, which functions on the widest possible franchise, handle the stresses and pressures? It is under these conditions that a free community gradually loses some of its freedom and gets nearer the idea of totalitarian government.

Freedom is necessary for the development of individual personality. I would suggest, as a second need, a sense of security for the individual. Unless the individual human being is placed above the struggle for bare existence, no real development is possible. That brings us to the question of providing a minimum standard of living, which involves the right to work for every person in the community. I would not go so far as to suggest, what is now regarded as essential to the welfare state, namely, full employment in the literal sense, which leads to slackness and to excessive demands. It is better to reckon with human weakness in this respect and leave a small margin of unemployment to serve as a deterrent.

It is important to provide for minimum wages, and also for a minimum amount of leisure, because you need not only the means to sustain physical existence but also time and opportunity for cultural enjoyment. There should be in addition in the community a satisfactory scheme of social insurance for those who cannot work, the sick and the old.

Sense of Law and Equality

I come now to the principle of love. When this is applied to human organisations such as a political democracy, the freedom of the citizen is limited by consideration for others - he cannot exercise his freedom without regard for the rights of other citizens. In a democracy to which the Christian principle is applied, freedom is disciplined freedom, and is based on what

political philosophers call a sense of Law. I have not seen a better summing up of this idea of disciplined freedom than in a prayer in the Morning Service in the Book of Common Prayer. "Oh God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of Whom standeth our eternal life, Whose service is perfect freedom". True freedom is that which expresses itself in the highest form of service. It necessarily follows that if the principle of love is to be applied to the working of a democratic society, then violence and class war are ruled out as methods by which social justice can be promoted.

Equality results from the application of the principle of love. There are various kinds of equality: first, equality in justice, equality before the law; second, equality in opportunities for growth and development, education, enterprise and choice of occupation; third, the difficult question of equality in respect of income and wealth. Here for practical purposes, the question is not so much one of elimination as of reduction of wide disparities. Until we reach a stage of moral development where need rather than ability determines a man's reward for work, it is necessary to maintain a certain differential between one class and standard of work and another. This problem is being tackled in this country today in many ways. In agriculture attempts are being made to remove wide disparities by suitable reform of land tenure. Efforts are also being made to reduce inequalities in professional and business incomes. There are various details on which I would not express any opinion at this stage, for example, whether the reduction in the size of land holdings should be confined to future transfers or should be applied also to present holdings, or the question of the size of the individual holding, and the basis on which compensation is to be paid. These are practical aspects of the question on which there would be wide differences of opinion. Then with regard to business and professional incomes, certain practical questions also arise. At what level is the ceiling to be fixed, and how exactly is it to be enforced?

Why is it necessary, under a socialistic pattern of society, to reduce wide disparities? First, if there are vast masses of unprivileged people in the country, with a sense that they are being wronged by the community, democracy becomes unworkable, government becomes unstable. Secondly, I think that in a democratic society which has any regard for equality, there should be little room for ostentatious living, which is a most demoralising force in society.

It is often thought, that the characteristic feature which makes it possible for a socialist society to achieve equality, is nationalisation - the State taking over the means of production. Personally, I do not think that nationalisation is essential to socialism, because many of the same objectives could be achieved by legislation, executive orders, and fiscal measures. I do not think it is an essential part of socialism that individual enterprise and initiative should be curtailed or suppressed.

Women and Children

I come now to an important question, which in my opinion calls for the application of the principle of equality, and that is the treatment accorded in a free society to women and children. This is a matter of very great importance in India at present. There is nothing more striking in the life

of Christ as depicted in the Gospels than the consideration and respect with which He regarded women. Considering the times and society in which He lived (and the social background of His life,) His attitude is extraordinary. I think there are two things in this country which make it necessary that women should come into their own. Anyone who has had experience in public life and administration in this country, would recognise that in the matter of intuitive judgment they are superior to men. Secondly, women are more concerned with children, and therefore have much greater faith than men in the future of the race which means greater inherent aptitude for constructive social work. Therefore, I feel that it is fundamental to provide opportunities for women in the reconstruction of our national life. There are various specific problems that arise: the question of the appropriate lines on which women's education should be organized, for example, the teaching of domestic science; the question of providing suitable opportunities for public work and service for women, and also the question of family planning which is beginning to interest workers in this country.

Family planning is a very important problem in the country today. As I understand it, family planning is not primarily meant for the regulation or control of population. Its primary purpose is to space out children in the family, partly with a view to maintaining the health of the mother, and partly to relieve her from household drudgery, so that her energy and interest may be released for work in the life of a growing community like ours.

I am not suggesting that the population question is not an important problem today. It is. But there is no more difficult question in the sphere of practical economics today than whether a country, India included, is over-populated, and if so, to what extent. It is a difficult question to answer because, in the first place, there is no accurate estimate of existing resources, and further, there is no estimate of the extent to which, by scientific improvements and planning, such resources can be developed. Secondly, there is no way of forecasting how a rise in the standard of living may effect the desire of people to have large families.

I am stressing family planning and the part that educated women can play in the family, because those of us who have been concerned with problems of secondary education will realize that there are two things which we do in a secondary school. First, we try to foster what may broadly be called the spirit of citizenship. Secondly, we try to impart knowledge and learning. Of these two, citizenship is more important, and the roots of citizenship have to be planted in the family, which is really the best school for the early years of a child's life. If that is so, it is easy to appreciate that, in a country like ours, there can be no more precious asset than an educated mother.

I come now to the question of children. I think some of the most beautiful passages in the Gospels refer to Christ's attitude to children: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God"; and this very moving passage "and He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them and blessed them"; "whosoever shall receive one of such children in My name receiveth Me". Today in our country far too little is done for children. There are certain immediate problems that require consideration, if the pattern of society we are trying to build is to be based upon freedom and equality. The education of children should be based on a

better understanding of child psychology. Definite attempts should be made in the near future toward free and universal education. There should be more strenuous efforts to eliminate child labour. Far more should be done to redeem waifs and delinquent children, and to provide healthy amusements, excursions for school children, milk and food for children attending school, and medical examination and treatment of school children.

Service and Study

The third element of Christian faith, as I have said, is the spirit of fellowship. There is, first of all, fellowship in service. Life finds its fulfilment and its greatest joy in work done in good human fellowship. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister." The fellowship found in voluntary service is one of the most rewarding experiences in life; I say voluntary service, because the quality and kind of work done on a voluntary basis is different from that done in a government organisation. Voluntary service is more creative and more satisfying and provides more room for fellowship. It is very important that, since the attainment of independence, social service has begun to make a much greater appeal than before. Various social service organisations are doing good work - the Social Service Board, the Bharat Sevak Samaj, the Community Projects; an increasing amount of voluntary labour is given for village reconstruction by peasants in many parts of the country, and there is the increasing service rendered by local self-government agencies and especially by village panchayats. In the course of my tours as chairman of the Taxation Enquiry Commission, nothing impressed me more than the extent to which voluntary service is being rendered in village reconstruction.

Before I leave this subject I would like to refer to something which has always struck me as very impressive in the record of Christ's life in the Gospels. Christ had power to turn water into wine, He had power to feed multitudes with a few loaves and fishes. But when He Himself was thirsty He went to a woman by the wellside and asked her for a drink of water; when He Himself was hungry He ran to a fig tree, meaning to pluck a few figs with which to satisfy His hunger. In the context of service, this is a side of the Gospel story of Christ's life which is profoundly suggestive.

Let me go on to another aspect of fellowship as service - fellowship in study. It is very important in the present state of India's development as a political democracy, to have little groups of independent students and thinkers who try to work out their ideas on current problems, and who, uninfluenced by the controversies of politics, apply their minds to getting at the truth in these controversies. It was the work done by the leaders of the English Fabian Society half a century ago that led to the formation of the Labour Party with a distinctive programme of its own. The British group Political and Economic Planning has been doing similar work and producing reports which have had an almost imperceptible but nevertheless real effect. Their method of work is based on the idea of fellowship in study and thinking.

Another fellowship is in practising the art of living the Christian life - religious ashrams in India and monasteries in European countries. In the quiet of their shelter, alone with God, men and women through the years have gathered strength for life's battle.

World Peace

Lastly we come to the question of international fellowship. There is no problem more perplexing, involving more dangerous possibilities than that of war and peace. I do not stress the ethical aspects of the problem because we are all familiar with them. But there is a practical aspect to this problem with reference to the pattern of society we are considering. For example, in India today our defence expenditure is a little over 200 crores. The deficit finance estimated for the next Five Year Plan is 200 crores a year; therefore, the question is not merely idealistic, but very real and practical.

Are there forces working against war today in the world? Two forces seem to make the elimination of war an immediate possibility. There is first the emergence of atomic weapons. This is a negative force. If a world war were to break out today, the nature of these weapons is such that not only would there be possibility of the universal destruction of the human race, but what perhaps weighs more heavily with some people, it is difficult to forecast whether there would be any victory for either party. The positive force is the United Nations Organization. Taking an objective view, my feeling is that it has undoubtedly prevented the occurence of what may be called a shooting war.

Christian Religion in India

I come now to my last point, and that is the power required for living the Christian life. Inspiration and strength for the exercise of the necessary spiritual discipline necessitates freedom for people to practise their religion. In this country we have freedom in the words of the relevant article in the Constitution, "to profess, practise and propagate" the faith. It is a matter for gratification that this principle has been confirmed more than once in recent years on the highest authority. There is a point in connection with this subject to which I would like to refer in passing. When in Western countries a revival of religion is sought as a means of strengthening and purifying the life of the community, it is the revival of the Christian faith in one form or another, because there is no other faith in these countries. In India the special nature of our problem arises from the fact that Christianity has to hold its own against other old established faiths, since we have in this country practically all the leading religions of the world.

A revealed religion like Christianity, as against a philosophical religion like Hinduism in its higher forms, is faced with special difficulties. A theology based upon certain historical assumptions, certain factual propositions which cannot be checked or verified by historical investigation, but which are accepted in faith, is in a difficult position. Christianity has made considerable progress during the past few centuries in this country. This is mainly because of its essential appeal, but it has been helped by certain adventitious circumstances. In the 16th and the 17th centuries in India, it was backed, not merely morally, but also politically by the Portuguese government. In the past two centuries it has enjoyed, if not administrative or political support, at least a considerable degree of moral support from the British government. Also during the past century and a half, Christianity has been identified with Western civilization and scientific culture and has shared their claim to superiority. But Christians should remember that neither the

British government nor any European government rules this country today, and that India is marching ahead in civilization, scientific culture and progress, and that Christianity will no longer find adventitious help there. Therefore it seems to me that a great deal more diligent and honest thinking is required on the part of Christian leaders and of the Church. Their aim must be to keep the essence of the faith, to be unafraid and prepared to go wherever the truth leads, and to discard what are mere trappings, remembering that the letter kill but the spirit gives life.

What kind of a society emerges from our discussion? Allowing for the fact that the Psalmist lived in a pastoral and primitive agricultural society and we in a largely industrialized one, there seems to be much in common between the picture he paints in the 144th Psalm and the society we are trying to reach. "That our sons may grow up as the young plants and that our daughter may be as the polished corners of the Temple, that our garners may be full and plenteous with all manner of store, that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets, that our oxen may be strong to labour, that there be no leading into captivity, and no complaining in our streets, happy are the people that are in such a state, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God."

II.

VILLAGE AND TOWN IN INDONESIA

(Dr. H. Baas, the author of this article is a Dutch missionary in Central Java)

In these days the problem of the relation between village and town is becoming more and more urgent, not only for Indonesian society as a whole, but particularly for the Christian parishes. To study the possibilities and difficulties in this situation, we must divide it into three parts: (1) villag (2) town (3) points of contact between village and town.

I. The Village

When a man from the city visits a village, several things will draw his attention:

Traffic Problems. A large part of the village roads can only be used for ox and horse-carts. It is not easy to reach a village by motorcar or by truck. The result is that few new influences from outside reach the village. Goods, and new ideas enter the village area only slowly. This isolation also causes conservatism. Changes are not easily accepted.

Village life is quiet and uniform. Most people have a sawah (wet rice field), a ladang (dry rice field), or some other piece of land. Those who have no land, work as farm labourers. There are no factories, no industries, no busy trade carried on by trucks, trains and boats. Sometimes we find a blacksmith or a carpenter. Trade is carried on only by small traders, and transportation is by bicycles and horse-carts.

There are no cinemas, no night-fairs, no restaurants, no shops with fine articles which give pleasure to the hearts of city people. At night only the voice of the gamelan is heard or a lonely flute. Because there is no electric light, only oil lamps, village people do not care to read difficult books. They like better to smoke while talking together.

Although there is a difference between farmers who own big sawahs and farm labourers who do not possess anything, although there is a difference between the rich and the poor, there are not the great contrasts which exist in the cities. In the cities there are people who live in palaces and others who only possess a mat on one of the city squares; there are those who every-day use their de luxe sedan, and there are others who can only creep forward, because they are crippled. The situation in the villages is different. Looked at from the outside, the village is one big family.

The village society has a social structure of its own. Because of their isolation, village people live much closer together. The power of the village authorities over the people is still strong. The word "father" is used for them, indicating that their protection is hoped for; all their instructions are followed as those of a reformer. This is still possible, because there are not so many inhabitants and most of them are known by the village authorities.

Another characteristic which is still strong today is "gotong rojong" or doing a job together. This adat (custom) does not have an economic, but a social base. The inhabitants of the village are one family, therefore they must help one another, not only at the time of the harvest or when a house is built, but also in times of joy or sadness: marriage, birth, death, circumcision. The old customs form a very important factor in the relations of the villagers. They form a kind of insurance for the sick and the less privileged in their difficulties. Unemployment never becomes a problem, there is always some work to do. Old age too is protected by these customs. When village people move to the town the greater part of these securities is lost. There man becomes an individual who has to look after himself.

On the other hand there is a great danger in these old customs. When they are nothing more than compulsion, however kind, and are not founded on love for one's neighbour, what is their value? This is very important for Christians renewing their perspective in society. If we Christians want to be the salt of this world, we shall have to start investigating the very foundations of our society. Are these old customs really institutions that should be continued or will it be necessary for us to test our customs according to Christian ethics. We should not simply throw them overboard, because they are already obsolete and inadequate in our modern world, but we should examine them carefully in the light of the gospel.

Rural development in the economic field is also closely related to social conditions. Everybody wants to be rich or at least to live without difficulty, yet there is a great difference in this respect from town people. What appeals is the similarity in the work of the village population. The greater part of them live directly from agriculture and the others (craftsmen and merchants if any) too cannot do a thing without agriculture.

The custom of gotong-rojong (mutual aid) does not lead to a highly developed division of labour. Until this very day a great part of what is necessary in the villager's household is homemade. You find very few shops, workshops, carpenters and blacksmiths. In the evening some such work is done, but without any regularity. Every family makes its own roofing-tiles, belts, baskets, mats and the like. But they only sell such things to get additional money income in order to be able to buy such goods as sugar, kerosene, salt and clothes. They do not work together and do not distribute their work in an economical way. There is no organisation to buy or gather raw materials nor to sell their products.

In general village people do not work in an economic but in a social way. In other words, they work to provide for their primary needs (foods, clothes and housing) and do not think about the future or how they could extend their business and get the greatest profit possible. On the other hand, in the towns we see people busy night and day. Most of them cannot sleep because of the difficulties they expect to meet next month or next year. In business you have to reckon with things of tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. Everyday prices fall and rise.

Villagers do not object to raising their income, but the extra money is used in a different way than it would be by economically minded people. This money is mainly used for social purposes. In the villages social standing is very important. A marriage is an occasion to give a "wajang" (Javanese shadow-play) complete with "gamelan" (Javanese orchestra). Houses are embellished, golden and other ornaments are bought just to raise one's social standing. For the same reason there are people who have a lot of cattle, not for business or agricultural purposes, but only as a sign of their importance.

Maybe somebody will ask: "But what is wrong in doing so? If this really is what they want, let them go ahead." But there is another thing we should keep in mind. No existing thing, goods, land, physical strength, skill, thinking, everything is our own property, but a present, a gift that comes from God. We are only stewards, who may use these things, but under one condition: that we use them as well as possible. And so we meet again the question of economic ethics: How have we until now been using our properties, tools, land and so on? How have we until now done our work? How is our money used and for what purposes? Christians, the people who confess their belief in Jesus Christ, are new people. And these new people should re-examine their way of life and should have a new view on their work and property. Christians though there are only a few of them are the salt, the light, the pioneers for their neighbours. These neighbours should be attracted by the example and conduct of the Christians and so the thought could come into their minds: Where does the difference between the life of the Christians and our life come from?

Today life in the villages is gradually changing. These changes are brought about by:

The improvement of roads and the construction of the connections from village to main road. Today buses can come to villages, where they never were seen in former days. Beside this a great part of the villagers have bicycles, and this means much faster connections with the areas outside the village.

Through the Djawatan Penerangan (Literature Information Service, charged with Mass Education) in every village films are shown about both domestic and foreign affairs. As far as possible popular libraries are set up to give those people, who want to broaden their knowledge, an opportunity to do so. Some people subscribe to daily papers or other periodicals. The result is that new views, new theories, knowledge of new methods in agriculture, in economics and social questions enter into the life of the village people. And if the ideals of the Vice-President of Indonesia can be realised, every man will have electricity and radio. The influence of these things will be incalculable.

Village children are sent to town to continue their studies at secondary schools. They come back with new knowledge, which is not yet mature, but they want to put their new possession into practice. This results in difficulties between the older and the younger generation. But what is much more serious is that the young ones do not want to go back to their village after completing their studies. They are already under the spell of city life, the possibilities for recreation and the higher salaries. They would not be happy any more in the quiet village, where the situation does not fit with the new emotions that rise in their hearts.

In these villages God has placed His parishes and charged them to preach the Gospel. Now what is the position of Christians in all these questions? How can the church of Christ be a lamp on a stand?

1. First by boldly facing the difficulties we meet, not by denying or avoiding them. We must frankly investigate, what is good and what is wrong in the life of our villages today. To do so we need a deep and careful knowledge about the relations in the village and the ways or relations of the village with the towns and areas outside the village. We have to examine what values still can be used and what values should be thrown away. We cannot blame the children who do not want to come back to the village, but we should study their reasons and see what causes the stream from village to town.

2. If we can formulate or already have a sound basis for developing the village of today, we can look for new possibilities and new methods to improve the situation, hoping that our young men and young women will be appealed to by the changes.

II. The Town

To understand the relationships between village and town, we must also say a few things about the life of the town.

The first thing that strikes us in the town is the density of population. The towns are overcrowded. The houses are built close to each other, street after street, quarter after quarter. Gardens and lawns are very few. It is all stone and brick and wood and "gedeg" (bamboo wattle-work). And do not overlook the illegal occupation. The streets are narrow, the yards a few square meters only.

In the second place the town is characterised by its noise. The dog-carts, bicycles, cars, trucks, factories, railways and an occasional horse produce together so much noise, that a person hardly can hear his own voice. There is no possibility to think quietly about the things of everyday. He is interrupted by another question, another person coming, telephoning or sending an urgent message. The rhythm and space of life in town is greatly different from the pace of village life.

In town man has many possibilities. In the village he only can become a farmer or an agricultural labourer. One or two persons work as craftsmen or small merchant, but the number of trades and occupations that can be chosen is very limited. In contrast to this in the town there are all kinds of factories, offices, transport companies and so on. In town you find also different schools for every direction of study. There are shops, where everything can be bought.

The town gives everybody the opportunity to do just what he is not allowed to do at home or in his village. There are cinemas, night-fairs, gambling houses, prostitutes, etc. There is no checking and no supervision from your social circle. If a man wants to hide, the town gives him the best opportunity.

III. Village - Town Connections

Everything mentioned here only gives a picture of the town as seen from the outside. For what reasons do village people move to the town? Why does the town grow so rapidly?

It was not until the beginning of the 20th century that the Indonesian towns grew into giant cities. In 1900 Djakarta had a population of about 150.000; in 1950 it already had more than 2.000.000. The population of Jogjakarta numbered 137.000 in 1937; in 1950 more than a million. Where do all these people come from? From the villages. But why do they not stay in the village?

1. Because the rural areas are overpopulated compared with the available arable land. There is no living for everybody in the village. There is very little land left, or only in such small portions, that the villagers cannot find their sustenance in the agricultural field.

2. Villagers today need money. In former days money was not a necessity. Every family produced what they needed or got it by barter in exchange for other things. But today new needs are created which cannot be provided for by the family itself: kerosene, soap, salt, sugar, lamps, etc. In addition people have to pay taxes in money. In former days they had to work a certain number of days for the ruler or the village chief. But a modern government is founded on a money economy.

Nevertheless a number of the farmers are not willing to leave their village or to live permanently in town. This results in a lively traffic between village and town by bicycle, buses, railway or simply walking. If the town is far from the village, they will only live there for a few months at a time. If their help is needed to cultivate the sawah's (irrigated rice fields) or at harvest-time, they come back to their village. These people, who come and go, are mainly unskilled labourers and the conditions under which they live in the towns are usually very bad. Frequently they sleep under the open sky, or in godowns or under sheds, which they make themselves from "gedeg" (bamboo wattle-work) or "atap" (thatching material).

Due to the development of trade and industry there is a gradual growing need for more labourers, not only for temporary employment but for the whole year round. Because of this there is a gradual growing class of labourers who have their fixed abode in town.

There are some other reasons to account for the steady flow of villagers towards the town. In the first place there are people who want to live in the town because of its luxuries and recreation possibilities. Others flee from quarrels or difficulties in their village. Others again want to send their children to secondary schools not available in the village. But all these reasons are not as important as the shortage of land and the over-population in rural areas.

In connection with the great numbers of people moving to the towns, several problems rise, which are very difficult to solve.

The housing problem. During the 2nd world-war no new houses were built so there is a great shortage in housing today. The building of houses for the people of low income is not an undertaking which promises big profits. The government can only give very little help and the question is left to the persons concerned. They have some experience from their village. But here the difficulties begin. For in town you do not find the materials as available in the villages. And the custom of mutual-aid or "gotong-rojong" does not apply to the life in town. This results in very bad sheds, made from flattened tins and half decayed "gedeg", located on the borders of streets, because there is no building ground available. In Semerang, Djokja etc. you can see this unlawful occupation everywhere. And what about health? In the villages that is easy. Though not satisfactory in every respect, houses in the village are spacious enough. But the situation is different in the "kampungs" (living quarters of the low income people in the town). The costs of a system of sewerage alone would be unpayable.

Work, poverty and crime. The people who come from the village have only their hands to work with. They are unskilled labourers. Their income is very low, they can hardly provide the first needs. Therefore their wives are forced to work away from home in order to get an additional income. Bad houses, deficient hygienics, shortage of money, all this brings poverty and criminality. People are not happy in their sheds and look for recreation outdoors. If they have no money, they start stealing, at first little things and gradually this grows into well organised crime. Beggars and vagabonds

form an important factor in city life. Because young men do not have enough money to start a family and because women look for an additional income, prostitution easily breaks up morals in towns. Because there is no connection with the original community, there is no natural social supervision. Man becomes an individual without any moral ties and the town becomes a human desert.

From what has already been said, we can easily understand under what conditions children and youngsters live. In the villages they would have been charged with tending the cattle or caring for the ducks, with grass-mowing or tasks in different organisations. They would be trained to be members of the village community, to have rights and duties. Nothing of this in the towns. Their houses are only used as places to sleep. In and outside their houses there is almost no place for sport or playing. Work to fill leisure time is not available. In the daytime they drift about in the streets, in the evening they are the voluntary or involuntary witnesses of the bad conduct of their parents.

Economically too these people meet many difficulties. In the village, they can live, though not easily. There is always rice or corn or at least a place to grow cassava. In the town people buy on credit or are always borrowing money. Often they are slow about paying their house rent. Then, when they get their wages at the end of a week or the end of a month, almost the whole of it goes to pay for part of their debts and for the interest.

1. When people move from village to town their connections with the old society are broken, the social supervision by their community comes to an end. Often the moral and religious ties too are broken.

2. New ties do not exist. In the "kampungs" (living quarters of the small village people in town) people of different racial and cultural origin are packed together. And outside the "kampung" they have no connections at all. The town is a stone desert.

3. The municipal government cannot deal with the problems of this gigantic growth. The costs of a simple housing scheme alone would be millions of rupias.

4. This shortage in the housing field brings with it many other shortcomings in the morals and economics of towns people.

Is the Christian church called to witness to Jesus Christ and to preach the gospel of salvation in this world of the village and town? What can we do? What is our task?

a) In the first place, the Christian church should bravely face the facts. The stream from village to town cannot be prohibited. We should consider that every year the population of the towns is growing and that in this way the membership of the urban congregations is growing too. In Jogja the church membership numbers more than 2000, in Solo almost 1500, in Magelang and Semarang 800 to 1000. If this is the fact, these parishes cannot be looked after as they should

It will be necessary to divide these parishes into several independent parishes. If a congregation has 1000 members or more there cannot be a real relationship between one member and the others. It will not be possible to choose a church board, because the members of the congregation do not know the persons nominated for board membership. Every activity will be handicapped because there will be hardly any real intercourse between one member and the others.

b) In big towns it is very easy to hide oneself. Often the attestation of church membership is not handed into the new parish, either from neglect or by intention. Therefore it is important that relations between village and town, between parish and parish, be closer.

c) Because the old ties are lost, we will have to find new structures of Christian community, based on Christian solidarity but adapted to urban conditions. In the towns village type of cooperation will not be practicable, but it will be possible for Christians to have a Cooperative or a savings-bank for house building together. In the towns it is not possible to till the ground together, but there are other possibilities: helping in case of illness, at festivities and in big families where help is wanted.

d) Opportunity should be provided for children and youngsters to use leisure time in a constructive way. Therefore playgrounds and meeting places for Christian youth are needed.

e) We could take care of special groups, for instance: labourers, students, hospitals and so on.

We should not only state facts and condemn town people because of their bad morals. We should not only build new churches or provide catechism classes. But we should try to find the social and economical reasons of the bad conditions in the town. We must consider, how we could guarantee a minimum life for everybody and build new social structures. If we are to help the people, who recently came to the town in this time of transition, we will have to overcome many difficulties. If the connection with the church is already broken, things are even more difficult. Therefore we need a clear insight in the connections between rural and urban areas, in order to be able to cooperate in building a strong Christian church both in the village and in the town.

(from Panjadar, a Theological monthly
from Central Java)

III.

EUROPE 1919 - 1939: THE WASTED YEARS OF STAGNATION

(by D.L. Munby)

The inter-war years were among the most tragic in European history, and not only because they ended in World War II. They were years of wasted efforts, of problems misunderstood and challenges evaded, and this not only in the political and social field, but perhaps above all in the economic realm. We now have Professor Svennilson's Growth and Stagnation in the European Economy to provide us with a mass of material about the economic development of the times, and he throws many a searching ray into dark corners. We both know too little and too much to be able to present a definitive picture; Prof. Svennilson claims no mor than that he details certain facts and puts forward certain hypotheses. What is clear is that there is no one theme and no simple explanation that will do justice to all the facts. The pattern was different in different countries, in different industries, and in the two different decades. The enthusiast for European integration or freedom of trade may notice how cartel arrangements in cement eliminated international trade and led to an absurd growth of capacity in excess of requirements, and this in a rapidly expanding industry; but he should also note that in another expanding sector high tariffs enabled four countries to build up efficient and progressive, if exclusive, motor industries. Economic developments do not fall into the patterns that dogmatists would like. I shall therefore confine myself to drawing attention to a limited number of points that arise from Svennilson's survey, and that seem to merit the attention of Christians concerned with the economic problems of our day.

1. Sheer ignorance is a more serious source of error than many admit. The tragic wastes of unemployment in the inter-war period were insoluble within the framework of accepted economic theories until the publication of Keynes's classi work in 1936. We can indict the economic advisers for culpable ignorance, but not businessmen and statesmen for following their advice. Another more subtle form of ignorance is always with us, and cannot be expelled. When is a change casual, and when does it become a trend? Much of Europe's failure was due to a misjudgement of trends in the rest of the world's demand for the goods Europe used to produce, and more especially of trends in the American economy, which led to a hidden dollar problem, severe competition from American exports, and the closing of the American emigration outlet for Southern and Eastern Europe. "The essence of the new situation was that Europe had to face a trend in world economy whereby its traditional position as the foremost industrial workshop of the world was becoming undermined by industrial progress in overseas countries.. The return to pre-war normalcy, of which a long term expansion of international trade formed a part, remained an expectation in business circles far into the twenties .... It was not until the middle of the twenties that doubts about the long term future were being voiced in the official investigations and international conferences of that time." Men reacted to the new world as if all that was required was a continuation of the old, as in steel, and particularly in coal and cotton in Britain. Of the British coal industry, Svennilson pertinentl remarks that its problems "were extremely complex and in the circumstances at the time they were far from understood; indeed it might be claimed that they ar still not understood clearly". It is not only in the British coal industry that we are still today fighting the economic problems of the inter-war years rather than the new ones of our time.

2. Many of the problems of adjustment could not be solved by the market mechani unaided, particularly when they arose from excess capacity in industries with heavy capital equipment. There are "limited possiblities of solving the trans-

formation problems of stagnating industries with heavy capital equipment on the basis of a market economy governed by a competitive formation of prices, or at least of solving these problems without too great a delay". Depression accentuated this difficulty, but it is not only in depression that the difficulty of altering the structure of an industry arises. A classic case is the British steel industry, where "the size and distribution of plant still partly reflected the technical conditions of earlier periods when the typical furnaces and plants were relatively small". It is significant that the post-war nationalization and de-nationalization did little of themselves to alter the industry's structure. The theorectically purging effects of bankruptcy do not necessarily work to eliminate the least efficient concerns. "In those industries where the problems of transformation involved both an elimination of firms and a modernization of plants a serious dilemma arose: to promote elimination, profits would have to be kept low; to promote modernization they would have to be high." Though the Iron and Steel Community has begun to tackle this problem in a constructive manner, in declining industries it still remains an unresolved issue, as in the British cotton industry, and among French wine-growers.

3. Clearly, State intervention is needed to aid "transformation", as Svennilson calls it. But the inter-war years are richer in examples of how state intervention can make the situation worse than in cases of positive achievement. "Imperfections of the old liberal market economy were partly replaced by imperfections in State intervention."
There were some exceptions, as in the German coal and motor industries, and some British and Swiss endeavours. But generally tariffs, subsidies, price control and deliberate restrictions were aimed to protect particular groups from the impact of change at the expense of the rest of the community. Thus railways were protected from road competition, and agricultural protection prevented the most efficient use of Europe's agricultural resources. "In many cases, Government intervention was designed more to protect the existing structure of enterprise than to speed up transformation ..... The new agricultural policy did not only support farm incomes but also tended to conserve the traditional obsolete structure of agriculture." Still today these are crying sores in the European economy, and we should be a long way nearer a united Europe, if Europe's farmers and their political backers could be persuaded to stop cutting each other's throats and get down to the always urgent job of providing food for the people efficiently and cheaply.

4. State intervention often worked closely hand in hand with the activities of private cartels and monopolies. Where these assisted in the modernization of industries, their actions were fruitful, but more often than not they merely preserved shares in the market for the efficient and inefficient alike. Even where modernization did occur, it often merely led to an increase in unutilized capacity without a corresponding increase in efficiency. "In this way, tendencies towards elimination of less efficient plants and towards concentration were checked. Only in a few cases was modernization combined with a strong concentration in the most efficient plants." The dead hand of these habits that grew up in the inter-war years is still with us.

5. The discrepancy between population growth in western and eastern/southern Europe was not accompanied by a movement of capital from west to east. The dependence of the smaller European countries on the three large industrial nations proved most dangerous when the large countries embarked on measures of

autarky and refused to effect the changes which would have led to mutual enrichment. Disintegration of the trade of the three large countries was significantly accompanied by a growth of trade between the smaller countries, as well as between non-European countries. Today's Iron Curtain is in part the result of these movements.

6. Measures were never taken to meet the changed position of Europe in world markets. The stagnation in Europe itself reduced the incomes of its overseas suppliers, who were thus unable to afford an adequate supply of Europe's own goods. Most obvious of all was Britain's failure to adjust itself to the loss of its export markets in cotton and coal, which reacted back on the whole British economy. On the other hand, the expansion of world demand for Scandinavian pulp had favourable effects in these countries. Not only was world trade declining, but Europe was playing a less important part in the world economy. It failed to adjust itself to the changes in world demand with sufficient speed, though in the thirties there were signs of a better adaptatio Furthermore, with the earlier prevailing policies of multilateralism, the decli in overseas exports often led to reductions in intra-European trade. Britain's concentration on imperial trade in the thirties was accompanied by a decline in the proportion of its imports from Europe. All these problems of international trade are complex and exceedingly difficult, but many of them still remain. A large volume of trade is not necessarily a good thing, and technical developmen as in the motor and chemical industries, may have led to a reduction of justifiable trade. But not all the disintegration of the pre-1914 world economy was of this nature. The tragedy of the inter-war years was that expansion of industry and the elimination of unemployment was so often accompanied by domestic insularity, as in Britain and Germany in the thirties.

7. How far was the failure to adapt due to a failure of nerve? Did European countries merely lack 'creative genius'? The contrast between the innovations in shipbuilding in Scandinavian countries and British sluggishness, and the lon delays in making use of American inventions, such as tractors, continuous wide strip mills in steel, and mass production methods in the motor industry, might well point to such a conclusion. But Svennilson, who rigidly ignores political and psychological factors and confines himself to the economic skeleton also points out that economic growth itself favours innovations and that we cannot ascribe Ford's innovations either to 'creative genius' or market conditions exclusively. "The contribution of the entrepreneur to cost reductions, which promote transformation and economic growth, cannot be disputed, but the effects on his activities of the surrounding market situation are just as clear." As so often in the economic field, interactions were complicated and various. Ther were the disappointed expectations of a return to normalcy after 1918; there were the pervading deflationary influences at work, and the unsolved problem of competition between old and new forms of capital, the growing resistance to change of trade unions and organized groups, and above all the "vicious circle of low efficiency, unemployment and low wages". In the twenties, when some of the problems became manifest, "emphasis was laid more on currency and monetary problems and less on a transformation of Europe's export industries". And thus we come back to the failure of the market to provide adequate incentives for adjustment. A similar warning may be required today, when stress is once again being laid perhaps too exclusively on monetary problems, as contrasted with the structural adjustments that were attempted in the immediate post-war years. Svennilson sums it up as follows: "Europe was suffering from the arteriosclerosis of an old established, heavily capitalized economic system, inflexibl

in relation to violent economic change." The invalid has been persuaded to get out of bed since the second World War, but it is not at all clear that his joints are as flexible as they could well become.

8. What of the role played by economic nationalism? The growth in the number of small countries after the first World War undoubtedly slowed down the development of Europe. "The importance of the national frontiers lies in the fact that these changes in various international commodity markets affected not only the development of the national industries directly concerned, but also, through the balance of payments, the whole economic development within the respective national areas. Consequently, the arbitrary combinations of resources within smaller or larger national areas had a decisive influence on long-term growth in Europe as a whole. It is likely that the existence of this national structure slowed down, not only the growth of some less favoured countries, but also the general development of Europe's joint resources. This effect was reinforced by the inter-relations of trade and payments of various countries." Nevertheless, a small country such as Finland managed to do very well in the inter-war years, whereas in others rapid population growth and dependence on agriculture provided insoluble dilemmas. Agriculture suffered above all. "In no other field was economic nationalism such a striking success to the detriment of general European efficiency. Yet in no other field of comparable importance to Europe as a whole were natural conditions so different and the potential advantages of trade over national frontiers so great." And yet, as we have seen, in a number of cases some of Europe's worst problems were at least partially solved when domestic expansion was given its head at the expense of the international community. "The strongest forces (in the thirties) making for continued expansion had their origin in domestic developments in which an important part was played by what may be called a self-sufficiency boom."

9. A general survey such as Svennilson's cannot do justice to the various experiences of different countries. Britain's dependence on overseas markets in contrast to French and German dependence on European markets had made a great difference to the development of these countries, and there were many different patterns to make up the European picture. France advanced under inflation in the twenties, and suffered continuous decline in the thirties. Germany did particularly well in the thirties under the stimulus of the re-armament programme, as did Britain with its favourable terms of trade, and its building and rearmament booms; but in both cases this advance was partly at the expense of less-developed countries, though in different ways. It would be particularly interesting to try to estimate the effect on Europe as a whole of the appalling British failures and evasions in the inter-war years, as in so many ways Britain stands apart from Europe, though also closely linked with it.

10. Finally, we may ask why economic growth matters? What is wrong with stagnation? Is it not merely an emotionally tinged word for stability? Svennilson uses it in an entirely objective sense to measure quantitative growth, in comparison with trends in earlier periods and different countries. In this sense it is associated with the multifarious changes that make up what he calls 'transformation'. Transformation leads to growth, and growth to transformation; both depend on investment, which is itself one of the major determinants of full employment and increased activity. There is no question that in the inter-war period Europe suffered undue losses of wealth as a result of unemployment and from slow rates of growth, though we must not forget the reductions in hours of work and increase in leisure. But we can still ask the

value question, and Christians must always ask it. As far as Europe in inter-war period is concerned, however, the answer can be given fairly easily. There is indeed a clash between progress and security. As Svennilson says, "it would certainly be a mistake to assume that the highest degree of efficiency, measured in terms of national income, was the sole object of economic policy. Stability of income and employment was coming to be considered more and more as a value in its own right ..... The slower economic progress during the inter-war period may be regarded partly as the result of the growing emphasis on stability. But this was also "partly conditioned by the limits set for State intervention in this transitional period; other types of intervention might have combined an equally high level of employment and an equally even distribution of income with a more rapid progress". Casting aside Svennilson's caution as an economist we might conclude that Europe's stagnation was not the result of a deliberate refusal to pay the price of rapid change and of an 'American standard of living' it was the slothful refusal to make the best of the circumstances, and the result of uncertain aims, divided policies, selfish clinging to past errors and a general conservatism of the worst kind.

11. There are no easy lessons for the post-war period. We have in many ways already done much better, but many of the legacies of the wasted years are still with us. It is clear from Svennilson's survey that the problems are manifold and without easy solutions. Many depend on the emergence of a balanced world economy, which is far to seek. But even in the relatively restricted domestic European sphere we shall not be clear of the wood so long as European economists have still to bother about the cotton and coal industries in Britain, about cartels in Germany, about the stagnation of large sectors of the French economy and about unemployment in southern Italy. It looks as if these old headaches will be with us for a long time.

IV.

NOTES ON THE PRESENT SITUATION OF EUROPE

(These notes are by a Christian layman who is well-informed on the European political situation.)

At the beginning of 1956 we might sum up our impressions by saying that the position of Europe is not improving from the political point of view, but that there has been a visible improvement on the economic level.

Political Situation

In the first place we must consider the position of Europe within the framework of the world wide East-West tension. During the past two years the tension has relaxed, either because the West is convinced that Soviet Russia does not intend to resort to war in the near future in order to conquer the world, or because Russia believes that the theory of preventive war or the "roll-back" of Communism is now completely out of favour in the United States.

In any case the relaxation in the situation is due to the conviction on both sides that there is no reason to expect war in the immediate future.

But the consequences of this situation are rather curious.

a) There is no relaxation whatsoever in the race for armaments. All the information received from Russia gives the impression that Russia is forging ahead as hard as possible to increase its armed power in atomic weapons, in the air force, in the navy and in guided weapons. And America seems to be concentrating on maintaining its military effort, so as to be able to counter the Soviet threat.

b) The race for world influence is as keen as ever. Peaceful coexistence is a tremendous competition for influence. Russia is constantly making efforts to penetrate in the Near East and Far East and in Africa, and the free world does not seem very successful in competing.

c) On the other hand, the atmosphere of relaxed tension has had a deplorable effect on the awareness of danger on the part of the European states. Though not actually questioning the Atlantic alliance, there is a tendency for its members to demand a slackening of effort, because there seems to be less need for its power.

The Soviet leaders must certainly have realised that the policy of détente enables them to pursue their own efforts, while reducing those of the Western world, and the general position of the Soviet sphere of influence therefore seems stronger than it was in Stalin's time.

In view of this situation it would be very desirable if Europe could redouble its efforts for political and economic cooperation, because by so doing it could contribute most effectively to the solidarity of the Western world and to an improvement in the situation.

The internal situation of the European bloc is not improving at the moment.

The failure of the European Defence Community has had a very bad effect on public opinion, which is still apparent.

In Germany, in spite of the considerable authority of Chancellor Adenauer, the tendency is increasingly nationalistic, or at least national. Contrary to what had been feared, this tendency is not militarist in form and the reconstitution of the German army does not seem to exercise strong nationalist pressure on public opinion. On the other hand, there is a growing feeling against the integration of Europe and in favour of the development of Germany. This tendency is represented by Dr. Ehrhardt (the Minister of Finance) and Dr. Strauss (Minister for Nuclear Energy). When the problem of Dr. Adenauer's succession arises, this will reveal itself as the dominant tendency.

In France there does not seem to have been any noticiable change in public opinion, since the rejection of the European Defence Community. The hopes of Monsieur Jean Monnet, former President of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community have not been fulfilled in this respect. However, since the elections of January 2nd one is glad to perceive the growing influence of Monsieur Guy Mollet, the leader of the Socialist Party, and at the same time President of the Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Economic Situation

In contrast to what has been said above about the political situation, it may be stated with satisfaction that some improvement has been made in the economic integration of Europe, and that it is from this angle that efforts can and must be pursued with the greatest chance of success.

The European Coal and Steel Community has completely overcome the crisis through which it passed after the rejection of the European Defence Community. One wondered whether it could survive this set-back; moreover the resignation of its founder, Monsieur Monnet, opened up a real crisis.

This crisis has now been completely overcome. The continuance of the European Coal and Steel Community is no longer doubted by anyone and its new President, Monsieur René Meyer, has acquired incontestable authority in the eyes of the six member-governments. Moreover what is called "la relance européenne" - the relaunching of the European idea - (the effort initiated by Monsieur Spaak and Monsieur Beyen, the Foreign Ministers of Belgium and Holland is now in full swing.

An agreement in principle was realised at the time of the Messina Conference in June 1955. Since then the conference of experts, presided over by Monsieur Spaak in Brussels, has worked very well throughout the autumn. The experts have agreed on a programme to establish a common European market stage by stage and to create a European atomic pool, apart from other agreements abou transport and electricity. The experts are now engaged in drawing up their final report; its completion was interrupted by the French electoral campaign.

From the institutional point of view the problem is to know what form the new organisation should take.

The experience of the European Coal and Steel Organisation shows that it is indispensable to ensure that such a body should be supra-national in character, so that it can take decisions independently of the governments, but at the same time remain in permanent contact with the governments concerned.

It is the special Council of Ministers of the European Coal and Steel Organisation, working in collaboration with the High Authority, which has enabled so much progress to be realised by the European Coal and Steel Organisation. Something similar should therefore be set up.

Up to the present some of the delegations have not yet made any definite decision concerning this problem, which will have to be tackled at the next governmental conference.

As far as the fundamental problems are concerned, the problems of transpor and energy do not seem to present great difficulties.

The conference centred around two basic problems: the establishment of a common market, and the establishment of a European pool of nuclear energy. Wit regard to the common market all the delegations wanted to be constructive; the French delegation, which was in the most difficult position at the beginning, showed a great deal of good will and realism in the negotiations on this point.

In the case of the second problem, that of nuclear energy, certain difficulties must be expected from the German side, as the German Government seems

rather reserved at the moment with regard to the creation of an European atomic pool.

There are other difficulties in achieving European cooperation. We must mention the problem of the European Organisation for Economic Cooperation and the attitude of England.

The European Organisation for Economic Cooperation is having a sort of race at the moment with the Six, in organising cooperation in the field of atomic research. This need not cause surprise or anxiety. It will probably be possible to organise a European pool for the European Organisation for Economic Cooperation, which would first be limited to the six countries and which would look towards the other European states in a spirit of cooperation.

On the other hand, England seems to be very cool with regard to plans for setting up a common European market, and seems rather frightened by the idea.

It seems clear that the six countries must go ahead, as they did in the case of Coal and Steel, and must then regulate their economic relations in the form of an association with Great Britain which should prove quite feasible.

At the beginning of 1956, therefore, the prospects of economic collaboration, economic integration in the sphere of nuclear research and in the establishment of a common market, seem quite encouraging and one may venture to hope that during the year a decisive advance will be made in the European sphere.

If so, this success would then enable conversations to be resumed concerning political integration.

V.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND AN ECONOMY OF ABUNDANCE

A Sermon by Reinhold Niebuhr

The National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. will hold the third National Study Conference on the Church and Economic Life, April 12-15, 1956 in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. Its theme is The Christian Conscience and an Economy of Abundance. The following sermon by Reinhold Niebuhr, professor of Applied Christianity at the Union Theological Seminary, New York City, is on the theme of the conference and will be of interest to our readers.

> And he said to them, "Take heed, and beware of all covetousness; for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions". (Luke 12 : 15)

Have you ever felt embarrassed about these words as I have been, not because we are particularly covetous, but because it challenges the whole of our civilization, seemingly at its core? The embarrassment increases when we

include the parable of the Rich Fool who built his big barns, who was told, "Thou Fool, this night will thy life be taken from thee". You cannot solve the ultimate problem of human existence by abundance. If you consider the whole Sermon on the Mount, perhaps the embarrassment changes a little from embarrassment about yourself to embarrassment about the Christian faith: "Be not anxious for your life"; "consider the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these". The prohibition of anxiety is so valid and yet it seems to be informed by such romantic nonchalance which defies every canon of a technical civilization. Civilization was born, as it were, with the anxiety about the wintry tomorrow which prompted the canning industry. In other words, what we face is the embarrassment that a Christian civilization should also be the most technical civilization in the whole world.

We are so technical, not because we simply defied the words of the text and became materialistic and covetous. Nor are we technical by accident. A technical civilization is the fruit of the biblical faith, of its attitude toward life, the life in this body on the one hand, of the affirmation of the goodness of life in this body, as symbolized in the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread". That means bread, and not allegorical bread as the mystic Gerald Heard suggests. That is bread that you bite with your teeth, and digest in your stomach. The other dimension to the Christian faith is given in the words: "Man does not live by bread alone".

The second basis of a technical civilization is the Biblical attitude toward nature. Nature is not divine; you can thrust impious hands into nature and make her bring forth her secrets. That is the basis of all modern science. The Greeks taught us that nature is rational, hence, the relationship between mathematics and physics. The fact that nature is rational is the basis of all deductive science. But the Bible taught us, in its doctrine of creation, that nature is not quite rational and this is the basis of all empirical science. You must be humble before the fact and not trust too much in deduction. Induction and deduction were joined in modern science and we conquered nature. That is how a Christian culture became a technical one.

There is a basic embarrassment we face in the so-called economy of abundance as Christians. The embarrassment has been heightened in America because of all the technical nations, we have the most abundance. Our living standards are three to five times higher than the European living standards and five to ten times higher than the Asian or African standards. We have multiplied the productivity per man by three times in this half century, since 1900. We have multiplied our gross products five times. We are sitting in plenty. There was a dream in the 19th century that there would be an economy of abundance sometime. The Marxists dreamed of establishing it. One of the ironic facts is that the godless materialists did not establish it, and the so-called godly materialists were very successful in establishing it, though not because we were godly and they were ungodly. So successful have we been in America, that we are both the subject of the envy and the contempt of the world (and you never quite know whether it is envy or contempt - and that creates the anti-American sentiment in Asia and in Europe).

Before I speak about the two moral and the two religious answers, or facet of answers to the problem, let us deal briefly with false answers that have bee

given to it. One of the false answers is: since techniques have developed not only the atomic bomb, but also all this materialism and covetousness, why do we not declare a moratorium on techniques? An Anglican theologian made that suggestion, and the Pope rather hesitantly made the same suggestion when the atomic bomb was first invented. He did not follow it up, he was not quite sure of himself about this, but he suggested that there should be a moratorium on techniques.

This is a false answer, for one reason because it is not possible, and for another reason because it is not feasible. It is not possible because technical advances are like forces of nature. They operate through the minds of men, but they do not operate by the wills of men. Where is the dictator who could declare a moratorium even in one nation, not to speak of all the Western nations, and say, "Let us stop this". Also, since technical power is morally ambiguous and can create good as well as evil, it is therefore not feasible to stop it. At the Amsterdam Conference the continental European delegates agonized about the unchristian character of techniques and how one must get rid of them. A distinguished Indian, Mr. Manikam, arose and pricked this bubble. He said, "you may have qualms of conscience about techniques, but before you get rid of them would you let them last just long enough so that we could eliminate our poverty?" It is a false answer to declare a moratorium on techniques.

The second partly false answer is to solve this problem of technical abundance by ascetic discipline. We must be poor. We must make ourselves poor. How are we going to make ourselves poor in a rich civilization? I notice that I, and the other members of the Union Seminary faculty, live in rather ostentatiously comfortable apartments, that is, they are not really ostentatious, but compared with the standards of the man who said, "the birds of the heaven have their nests, and the foxes have holes, and the Son of Man hath nowhere to lay his head", they are. If you want to go back to that standard you have to practice the strictest ascetic glorification of poverty. Is poverty really the source of virtue, or the guarantee of virtue? Fortunately we have in the Scripture, in the Matthian and Lukan passages, this wonderful expression of the ambiguity of poverty - "Blessed are the poor", said St. Luke; "Blessed are the poor in spirit", said St. Matthew, and one guesses that our Lord said something that meant both of these. There is no question about "how hardly they that are rich will enter the kingdom of heaven", but there is also no question that there is no guarantee of virtue in poverty. "Blessed are the poor", but "blessed are the poor in spirit". And they are particularly blessed if they are poor in spirit though they might be rich. These are the facts which prevent us from following a strict ascetic answer to these ultimate questions. Incidentally, no complicated system of legalism would give us an answer to just how poor or rich we should be. The American housewife, for instance, has many more gadgets than any housewife in the world, but she also has fewer servants. The gadgets have been built into our whole civilization. I believe thoroughly that we must avoid ostentation, but how are we going to avoid ostentation collectively even if we avoid it individually, because collectively we are ostentatious from the standpoint of Europe or Asia. An English friend who came annually to the United Nations, said some years ago, "I do not like America anymore - your cars are getting bigger and bigger and the chrome is getting shinier and shinier". He said that before our cars broke forth in all these

Easter egg colours of the present time. We ought to have a decent sense of the esthetic and the ethical problem of life in an abundant civilization, but we do not solve our problem by any kind of an ascetic discipline. Individuals may, but civilization does not.

Dismissing the false answers and the half-false answers, let us confront the moral and religious questions, which we face in an economy of abundance, particularly in America. The first moral problem is of course to establish justice. The more we have in the common fund, the more intolerable injustice becomes, that is the failure to divide the common fund equitably. I do not think we ought to be complacent about establishing justice. Wherever there is great disproportion of power and weakness, (and there are still disproportions of power and weakness in our country) there is injustice. But it certainly must be observed that, contrary to all the expectations, the economy of abundance has on the whole made for justice. When there are not clamant claims and counterclaims on the common fund, you can distribute it with relative equity. In addition to our millionaires, we are also a nation where teamsters get a much larger salary than university professors. That may be justice too (I merely say "may" because I am not sure, as a professor, that this is so). This indicates, at any rate, that we have had a tremendous social revolution based upon an economy of abundance. So what seemed to be such a desperate task, only twenty years ago, and what still is a difficult task, is now a manageable one. We have to put it in the first place, not because it is the most serious, but because in a way it is the easiest to establish justice domestically.

The second great moral problem which transcends all ascetic disciplines is how this nation with its tremendous power, (power which is based upon technical proficiency rather than wisdom) how is this nation going to relate itself mutually and generously and justly to the poor world? Everything that we do about that will be insufficient. There is a snare to our conscience in every policy because we will imagine ourselves generous and the recipients of our generosity will be more critical than we are, partly because we will not be as generous as we imagine we are, and partly because our motives are more mixed than we realize they are. This is one of the great causes of misunderstanding between this rich America and the poor world. So serious is the misunderstanding that every kind of an imagination and patience will be necessary on the part of both the rich and the poor to establish any degree of mutuality at all. I see this in the present week when there is a danger that we will cut down our aid programme to foreign nations in order to balance the budget. What could be more important for a rich nation than to balance the budget? These are the two moral problems: to establish justice at home, and to establish a degree of mutuality with ourselves and the world since God in His providence has given us this very dangerous leadership of the community of free nations.

But when I speak of these political and moral issues, I am still speaking about that which affects us as collective man, as Americans if you will, or as Europeans, or as devotees and beneficiaries of Western civilization.

Let us come now to the two great religious issues which we confront in an economy of abundance. The first is quite obviously that we should have a decent understanding of the providential factors which entered into our wealth, so that we will not arrogantly regard it as we are constantly tempted to do, as a fruit

and as a proof of our virtue, the virtue of diligence for example. When it comes to proficiency, the northern west Europeans, the Germans, the Swiss, the Scandinavians, the Dutch are just as efficient as we are, and perhaps more diligent because they are poorer, but they have not been favoured either by nature or history as we have been favoured. There must be an understanding of the providential factors which enter into our wealth, or we will become the arrogant people on earth and here the word of Deuteronomy to Israel is absolutely pat for our situation - "And when thou hast eaten and art satisfied and thy gold and silver are multiplied and thy cattle and thy flocks are multiplied .... beware lest thou forget the Lord thy God and say my right hand has gotten me this wealth". This is a text that is particularly relevant to America just before Thanksgiving Day. The Thanksgiving proclamations of the American presidents for the last two decades, have increasingly departed from the original rather purely religious spirit of Thanksgiving, and they have increasingly become congratulations to God for having such very wonderful children in America. The wealth of our continent, the breadth of our economic unit which might be regarded as the fruit of wisdom, but really was possible only because we conquered this continent at the precise moment when a technical civilization made it possible to organize a whole continent as one political and economic unity, - these are all providential factors. I do not know whether you would regard it as providential that we could give ourself to industrial efficiency without any restraint, the restraints that all of the European aristocratic nations have. Perhaps this is a special pleading, but we do not give ourselves so much to the fruits of industrial efficiency in wealth nearly so much as we give ourselves to the idea of efficiency itself, so that we are now in danger of becoming the first great culture of history that is dominated by its economy. We have to live as luxuriously as possible because the automobiles can come out of the assembly line in greater and greater numbers and we have to buy them in order to keep the economy going. This is a fantastic consequence and revelation of the weakness of man despite his greatness.

This brings us to the final point where the Word of God might reach us. A technical civilization is vulgar religiously, not necessarily morally, but religiously, because and insofar as it tries to cover up the human predicament, as illustrated by that parable of the rich young fool. We are so weak and so strong, so strong and so weak, and if we, by technical efficiency try to cover up our weakness and finiteness, the fact that we are meant for death, our whole culture will turn into vulgarity for very obvious reasons. This human predicament is well explained by a poet of the 18th century:

> Poor man that art the tennis ball of error,
> The ship of glass tossed on a sea of terror,
> Creeping with pain and crying through the womb,
> Going with fear and sighing to the tomb,
> How brief thy life, how sure thy fall,
> How art thou nothing when thou art most of all.

How art thou nothing when thou art most of all - that is the human predicament. This is the predicament of death which we have messed up with the predicament of sin. Why sin? In our desperate anxiety to prove that we are not weak, finite, subject to frailty we have involved ourselves, as St. Augustine said, "in sin which we could have avoided, in escaping death which we could not have avoided". I do not mean dying, I mean death as a symbol of everything that man is, in spite

of his greatness, as merely a creature. This is the central issue which we face as individuals. Can we comprehend the meaning of grace through forgiveness, forgiveness of our sins and the promise of life everlasting in a technical civilization which makes us so many promises in this life? Shakespeare is not usually regarded as an apostle of religious inwardness, but Shakespeare's sonnets all revolve around this theme:

"Poor soul, the center of my sinful earth
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth?
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease
Dost thou upon thy fading mansions spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?
Then soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more.
So shalt thou feed on Death, which feeds on men,
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then."

This is hardly a doctrine of immortality but it is, I think, a doctrine obliquely related to the Johannine conception of eternal life, challenging us to live a life of serenity amidst the frailties and frustrations of the flesh and of history, and to be wary to regard the abundance of life on one level as the final abundance of life. For the complete dimension of the Christian faith is contained, on the one hand in the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread", and on the other hand, in the observation "man does not live by bread alone".

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